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# Home Economics Careers With The Cooperative Extension Service



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# Home Economics Careers With The Cooperative Extension Service

## Extension Home Economists:

### Teaching People To Use Their Resources Wisely For Better Living

As an important basic part of the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) system in over 3,150 counties and cities of this Nation, Extension home economists present educational programs for better living to people of all ages and income levels.

Extension home economists help both individuals and families acquire the understanding, capabilities, attitudes, and skills they need to solve day-to-day home and family problems and to manage their own resources.

CES home economists focus their educational activities on major areas such as:

- Food, nutrition, and health.
- Human development and family strengths.
- Financial planning and resource management.
- Textiles and clothing.
- Housing, furnishings, and design.
- Energy conservation.
- Health and safety.



*Extension home economist counsels young couple in money management.*

## Education that Began in 1914

The Cooperative Extension Service, a nationwide system for informal education, was established by Congress in 1914 as a partnership of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the state land grant colleges and universities, and county governments. Cooperating colleges and universities are those authorized by Congress in the 1862 and 1890 land grant acts.

Extension county and city staffs in the 50 states, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and most recently in Micronesia and American Samoa draw on the knowledge of university, college, and USDA specialists, as well as research scientists, as they develop educational programs that help local people apply that knowledge to better their lives.



*County chairman discusses financial needs of her county office with local legislators.*

## **Home Economics Career Options in Extension**

**County and City Home Economists:** Localized Extension educational programs are planned with the assistance and input of citizen advisory groups. Some local or field staff members do their work on an area or regional basis within a state. Some home economists work with youth as 4-H agents, while others work partially or entirely with adults. A bachelor's degree is the minimum qualification.

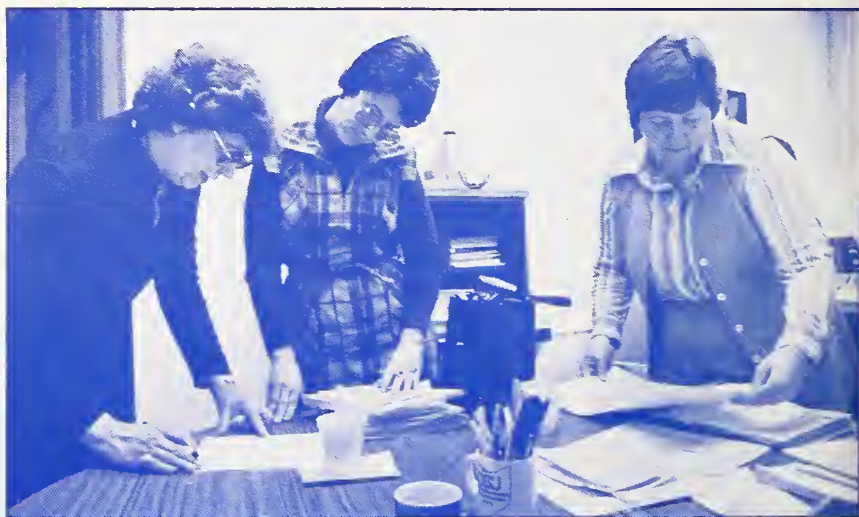
**State Specialists:** Land grant college or university state specialists, in the various subject matter areas shown above, back up the local or field staffs. State specialists provide up-to-date information, in-service training, and resource materials such as publications, audiovisuals, and media releases. Advanced degrees are usually required.

**State Leaders of Home Economics:** State leaders or associate/assistant directors of Extension home economics have statewide administrative responsibilities for home economics educational programs. They may provide technical leadership to several hundred state specialists and local field staff. State leaders work in a team with other Extension program administrators in agriculture, natural resources, 4-H and youth, and community and rural development. State leaders of home economics report to the state Extension director. Usually, a Ph.D. is required.





*County home economist (left) advises volunteer on sewing techniques she will share with 4H youth on an Indian reservation.*



*State leader (left) discusses plans with home economics administrative assistant and secretary before she flies to Washington, D.C. to testify at a federal hearing on Cooperative Extension Service programs.*

## Work Locations

County and city Extension home economists are employed all over the country in over 3,150 locations, with offices usually located in the county seat community. State specialists and leaders are usually located at the land grant colleges or universities which are listed later in this publication.



*County home economist trains group of "master" food preservers so they can teach others about food preservation.*

## Qualifications Needed to Start Your Career

- A bachelor's degree in home economics or related fields such as nutrition, food science, or social sciences, and eligibility for admission to an accredited graduate school. (Field staff in most states are encouraged to obtain graduate degrees. Some states now require a master's degree for employment.)
- Demonstrated ability to plan, organize, develop, implement, and evaluate education programs.
- Related work experience. (Good but not always necessary.)
- Evidence of leadership qualities, enthusiasm, and initiative.
- Ability to lead, teach, motivate, and speak and write well. (Good communication skills.)
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with people, including the disadvantaged and minorities.
- Desire to keep learning.
- Good health and stamina.
- Genuine interest in people, their problems, and potential.
- Keen sense of responsibilities and desire to teach and assist others.
- Integrity, good judgment, and common sense.



## What You Would Do as an Extension Home Economist

As an Extension home economist you would do some or all of the following:

- Work with individuals, families, and groups to help them develop management skills, and solve problems in family and community living.
- Work outside the office with people in formal workshop situations as well as informally at shopping mall exhibits, county fairs, etc.
- Advise Extension homemaker groups and work with 4-H clubs and other youth. Also work with other community agencies, representatives of business and industry, government officials, and academic faculties.
- Write newsletters and newspaper articles. Plan and present radio and television programs.
- Use new technology such as dial access systems, cable TV, computers, and teleconferencing to reach and teach people in your community.
- Conduct surveys and meet with clientele to identify real needs of the community in order to determine future programs.
- Plan and conduct educational programs with other Extension staff members.



*Extension state specialist (left) is interviewed by local TV reporter regarding food prices at farmer's market.*



## Your Career and Professional Growth Benefits

As an Extension home economist you will be a staff member of a state land grant college or university, often with faculty rank, and of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with opportunity for promotion within the system.

You will have:

- Personal satisfaction from helping people help themselves.
- Opportunities for growth through in-service training and membership in professional organizations, such as the state and National Associations of Extension Home Economists, American Home Economics Association, etc.
- Opportunities to advance professionally into positions as county/city chairman, area specialist, state specialist, state leader of home economics programs, state director of all Extension programs, a Federal specialist, a program leader, or as a member of the administrative staff in Washington, D.C.
- Opportunity to work as a member of a highly skilled, professional team of educators.
- Special assignments to task forces and committees on a state, regional, or national basis that offer growth and professional improvement opportunities.
- Liberal retirement, health, and life insurance plans.
- Some travel, mostly within the county/city or the state.
- Recognition from your peers—people in related professions—for the work that you do.



County home economists at yearly National Association of Extension Home Economists (NAEHE) meeting find a quiet corner to share news about their programs and activities. Professional improvement is an important part of an Extension home economist's life.

- Opportunities to work with research scientists.
- Opportunities for employment with Cooperative Extension Services in other states and locations within the system.

#### Additional Opportunities May Be Available:

- Special assignments for Cooperative Extension Service employees to obtain grants, fellowships, sabbatical leave, etc.
- Summer assignments working with high school, undergraduate, and graduate students who are interested in Cooperative Extension Service careers.



*County chairman conducts staff meeting with professionals in agriculture, home economics, 4-H youth work, and community development.*

### **For More Information on Extension Home Economics Careers**

If you wish more information about career opportunities from an Extension home economics professional near where you live: You may contact your State Leader of Home Economics, Cooperative Extension Service, by finding the address(es) for your state in the list that follows, and by sending a letter asking about state career opportunities.



## The Land Grant Colleges and Universities of the United States

Alabama	—Auburn University, Auburn 36849 —Alabama A&M University, Normal 35762 —Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee 36088
Alaska	—University of Alaska, Fairbanks 99701
American Samoa	—American Samoa Community College, Mapusaga Campus, P.O. Box 2609, Pago Pago 96799
Arizona	—University of Arizona, Tucson 85721
Arkansas	—University of Arkansas, Little Rock 72203 —University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff 71601
California	—University of California, Berkeley 94720
Colorado	—Colorado State University, Fort Collins 80523
Connecticut	—University of Connecticut, Storrs 06268
Delaware	—University of Delaware, Newark 19711 —Delaware State College, Dover 19901
District of Columbia	—University of the District of Columbia, Washington, D.C. 20004
Florida	—University of Florida, Gainesville 32611 —Florida A & M University, Tallahassee 32307
Georgia	—University of Georgia, Athens 30602 —The Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley 31030
Guam	—University of Guam, Agana 96910
Hawaii	—University of Hawaii, Honolulu 96822
Idaho	—University of Idaho, Moscow 83843
Illinois	—University of Illinois, Urbana 61801
Indiana	—Purdue University, West Lafayette 47907
Iowa	—Iowa State University, Ames 50011
Kansas	—Kansas State University, Manhattan 66506
Kentucky	—University of Kentucky, Lexington 40546 —Kentucky State University, Frankfort 40601
Louisiana	—Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge 70803 —Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge 70813
Maine	—University of Maine, Orono 04469
Maryland	—University of Maryland, College Park 20742 —University of Maryland, Eastern Shore Princess Anne 21853
Massachusetts	—University of Massachusetts, Amherst 01003

Michigan	—Michigan State University, East Lansing 48824
Micronesia	—College of Micronesia, Ponape, E.C.I. 96941
Minnesota	—University of Minnesota, St. Paul 55108
Mississippi	—Mississippi State University, Mississippi State 39762
	—Alcorn State College, Lorman 39096
Missouri	—University of Missouri, Columbia 65211
	—Lincoln University, Jefferson City 65101
Montana	—Montana State University, Bozeman 59717
Nebraska	—University of Nebraska, Lincoln 68583
Nevada	—University of Nevada, Reno 89557
New Hampshire	—University of New Hampshire, Durham 03824
New Jersey	—Rutgers State University, New Brunswick 08903
New Mexico	—New Mexico State University, Las Cruces 88003
New York	—New York State College of Agriculture, Ithaca 14853
North Carolina	—North Carolina State University, Raleigh 27650
	—North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro 27420
North Dakota	—North Dakota State University, Fargo 58105
Ohio	—The Ohio State University, Columbus 43210
Oklahoma	—Oklahoma State University, Stillwater 74078
	—Langston University, Langston 73050
Oregon	—Oregon State University, Corvallis 97331
Pennsylvania	—The Pennsylvania State University, University Park 16802
Puerto Rico	—University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez 00708
Rhode Island	—University of Rhode Island, Kingston 02881
South Carolina	—Clemson University, Clemson 29631
	—South Carolina State College, Orangeburg 29115
South Dakota	—South Dakota State University, Brookings 57007
Tennessee	—University of Tennessee, Knoxville 37901
	—Tennessee State University, Nashville 37203



Texas	—Texas A&M University, College Station 77843 —Prairie View A&M College, Prairie View 77445
Utah	—Utah State University, Logan 84322
Vermont	—University of Vermont, Burlington 05405
Virginia	—Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg 24061 —Virginia State College, Petersburg 23803
Virgin Islands	—College of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix 00850
Washington	—Washington State University, Pullman 99164
West Virginia	—West Virginia University, Morgantown 26506
Wisconsin	—University of Wisconsin, Madison 53706
Wyoming	—University of Wyoming, Laramie 82071



*City home economist (left) uses computer terminal to help young homemaker understand her family's dietary needs.*

Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture, offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, or handicap, and it is an equal opportunity employer.

April 1983



